**Protection from diseases transmitted *via* environment**

952. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how far Government policy has been successful in protecting people from diseases transmitted *via* the environment under the Public Health Act and promoting health and prolonging quality of life;

(b) how the District Medical Officers system has been able to tackle the treatment of the suffering patients; and

(c) whether the services provided under these two system/Health Officers and Medical Officers are adequate in protection and treatment of diseases or Government are thinking of strengthening of the same by enlisting people's participation to meet the objectives?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) While there is no Public Health Act in operation at the national level, Ministry of Environment and Forests in the Government of India administers various legislations to protect water, air and environment. The Pollution Control Boards at the Central and state level assist to achieve this objective. The Ministries of Water Resources, Rural Development and Urban Development in the Government of India support the State Governments in providing safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

Prevention and control of diseases is the primary responsibility of the State Governments. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments through its national health programmes to prevent/control various diseases including those transmitted *via* environment. The national health programmes have envisaged private partnership whenever necessary to meet the objectives.

**Increase in malaria and dengue cases**

953. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 1848 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 20th August, 2004 and state:

(a) whether there has been an abnormal increase of cases of dengue and particularly of malaria;

(b) the number of cases of dengue and malaria so far reported in Delhi this year after July, 2004 and the number of casualties reported so far;

(c) the specific reasons for abnormally large number of cases of malaria this year after 1996; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken against officers and staff who are mainly responsible for taking action to prevent breeding of mosquitoes that spread these diseases during and after monsoons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) As per reports received from the concerned Health Authorites, there has been no abnormal increase of Dengue and Malaria in Delhi during 2004 as compared to those in the previous years. 575 confirmed Dengue Cases with 3 deaths and 605 Malaria Cases with no death have been reported this year after July, 2004.

(d) Directorate of National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme regularly monitors mosquito breeding in MCD and NDMC areas and finding are conveyed to the concerned agencies on day to day basis for initiating anti-larval measures and taking appropriate remedial measures to prevent breeding of mosquitoes that spread the diseases. Action against the staff responsible for non-implementation of the control measures are taken by the respective implementing agencies.

**Health benefits of spinach and its promotion**

954. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that spinach is a panacea for various ailments;

(b) if so, the health benefits of these vegetable;

(c) in view of its innumerable benefits, whether the Government propose to encourage use of this vegetable; and

(d) if so, the details of there action plan?